

2. Take the necessary legislative and administrative actions to make TDA, OPIC and EXIM programs available to our companies in the Caucasus, Central Asia, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Since U.S. companies will frequently not be participating as majority owners in pipeline and consortia agreement, we need to find creative ways in which we can assure their access to these programs within existing requirements on U.S. content and equity participation. Our competitors, as noted below, are already operating in the area with government-backed credit lines. Repealing Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act would make it easier for these programs to operate effectively throughout the Caspian region. We recognize that opening these programs in individual countries is contingent upon decisions from respective Boards of Directors taking into account legal strictures and country risk assessment.

3. Encourage high-level visits to and from the region.

Many observers point to high-level visible government support as major factor in the successful involvement of British, French, and Japanese firms throughout the Caspian region—support which gives these companies a significant competitive edge against American companies. This support typically takes two forms—high level, high visibility trade missions and export credits. The Caspian Basin is new to many political and business leaders in the U.S. High-level congressional, administration, and business travel to the region—for example cabinet-level participation in the oil and gas shows in Baku, Ashgabat, and Almaty, and in support of companies' bids for contracts—would be particularly useful. These visits should be reinforced by invitations to decision-makers from the region to come to the U.S.

4. Continue active U.S. support for international and regional efforts to achieve balanced and lasting political settlement of conflicts in Nagorno-Karabakh, Abkhazia, and elsewhere in the region (e.g. Chechnya, Tajikistan). Be prepared to contribute a fair share to reconstruction and development costs of war-torn zones following achievement of peace agreements.

5. Make available USG resources to support a UN-led peace process in Afghanistan if/when the Afghan parties agree on terms for these elements.

A lasting Afghanistan peace settlement is not only in the interests of the Afghan people but would promote regional stability and development. U.S. companies are eager to participate in exporting Caspian energy via Afghanistan.

6. Encourage installation of upgraded navigation systems in the Bosphorus.

This issue should be kept separate from consideration of a main export pipeline through Turkey: it stands on its own merits. As noted earlier, the capacity of the Bosphorus to carry Caspian oil safely and efficiently will eventually be exceeded. The present system is inadequate and needs replacement regardless of the additional volume of oil which transits this area. Turkish concerns for the safety of the 13 million people who live along the straits are valid and we should work through the International Maritime Organization (IMO) to set reasonable standards for safe and secure transit through the Straits. The adoption of more advanced technology would further improve the flow of traffic in the Straits and increase safety for shippers and reduce the risk of an environmentally devastating oil spill. Currently, while there are some aids to navigation, there is no continuous tracking of ships. The USG should continue to urge and work with the Turkish government to install a state-of-the-art Vessel Tracking System

(VTS) for the Turkish Straits, preferably from an American supplier, which would provide complete radar coverage throughout the Straits and would have the ability to communicate with ships by radio. The U.S. Coast Guard is currently working on installing 17 such systems across the United States. The Coast Guard estimates that complete coverage of the Straits would cost \$60 million to install, and up to \$1 million annually to operate. The Turkish government has prepared a tender to install a world class VTS three times. The USG should support efforts to secure international financing for such a system.

7. Encourage the development of new markets in the Black Sea Region.

All current oil export routes from the Caspian Basin terminate at the Black Sea. Given the limitations on the volume of oil which can be exported through the Bosphorus as outlined above, alternatives to the Straits must be identified and developed. One possibility is to develop the oil, gas, and power markets in the Black Sea Region and to develop the infrastructure to transport Caspian energy to other markets. Additional sources of energy for the countries of this region and increased transit fees would stimulate economic development, reduce existing monopolies over supplies, and provide lucrative markets for the producing countries.

8. Structure assistance to the region to encourage economic reform and the development of appropriate investment climates in the region.

Continued USG support through technical assistance is essential in assisting these countries to establish strong market economies and encourage the emergence of a financially vibrant energy sector. Transparent legal and regulatory environment, and restructured and privatized energy sectors in these countries will ensure the commercial viability of new investments and expand opportunities for U.S. industry. To a great extent, the Clinton Administration's ability to tailor assistance strategies to address U.S. interests is hampered by restrictions on how assistance money can be spent. Besides the restrictions imposed by Section 907 of the FSA on USG funded assistance to the Government of Azerbaijan, Congressional earmarks limit assistance flexibility and often channel money away from projects and programs which might further U.S. interests more rapidly. We recommend that earmarks and other restrictions be kept as low as possible, if not completely eliminated.

TRIBUTE TO THOMAS SALMON

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to Tom Salmon, president of the University of Vermont, who will be retiring later this month.

Tom and I have worked together for nearly three decades. First as young lawyers in our hometown of Rutland, VT, and then in the general assembly. While he went on to serve as Governor for two terms, I went to Washington to serve in Congress. Although we represented different political parties, we shared a love for Vermont which enabled us to work together and put politics aside.

More recently, during Tom Salmon's tenure as president of the University of Vermont, we have had the opportunity to work closely again. His commitment to improving the quality of education has been outstanding, and I have watched with admiration as the univer-

sity has flourished under his guidance. His capacity to make tough decisions while also connecting with students at the university has contributed to his success. No one could ever question Tom Salmon's dedication after hearing about the time he had to excuse himself from an important meeting of the Governor's council of economic advisors because it conflicted with his graduate school seminar. This has been a job that Tom has loved, and one that he has done well.

As I think back over the years, one thing is very clear, Tom Salmon is a man who cares about the State of Vermont and its citizens. Be it as Governor, teacher, chairman of the board, or adviser, his outstanding ability always shines through making him one of Vermont's most successful leaders.

COMMENDATION FOR LINDA ESPINOSA

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. President, I would like to take the time today to commend an amazing young woman from my home State of Colorado.

Linda Espinosa is a very special person. Not only has she been named the valedictorian of her school in Colorado Springs, but she is also one of only six people each year to be awarded the Junior Achievement Award by Amway Corp. This achievement is even more significant because the award is given to outstanding individuals who have excelled in a particular area, despite suffering from hardship or disability. Linda's triumph has been overcoming deafness to lead her class at the Colorado School for the Deaf and Blind.

I admire Linda's determination and scholarship, and ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing her accomplishment. I wish Linda the best of luck in her future endeavors. We can all learn a lesson in perseverance from this courageous young woman.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor.

SUMMARY OF A REPORT OF THE SENATE DELEGATION VISIT TO ASIA

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to insert in today's RECORD a summary of a longer report on a November 1996 trip taken by a congressional delegation consisting of Senators GLENN, LEAHY, DORGAN, KEMPTHORNE, and myself. The delegation traveled to Vietnam, China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, meeting with senior government officials in each location. The summary discusses the highlights of the trip. The full report is also available. As the trip report summary highlights, members of the delegation raised important U.S. national priorities in each country and gained valuable insight into the leaders' views.

There being no objection, the summary was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows: